226 far the poison has progressed. As soon as the muddy water reaches them, the men begin beating the bundles of poison-vine on rocks, dipping them in the water from time to time, so that the juice runs into the stream, which it turns slightly milky. The women and small boys stand below and follow the poison down the stream, scooping out the fish with nets (iruʔ) or with their hands. When the men can be spared from the beating, they join the women and gather fish also to some extent, but more as an amusement, sometimes quite unnec-
[462] essarily shooting them with arrows. As a task, the gathering is assigned to the women. New doses of poison may be beaten into the water at lower points, especially in the larger pools, if needed.

The effect of the poison becomes attenuated quickly, even a large quantity of strong poison having little or no effect a kilometer below the point where fishing is started. A few fish are killed outright, but most of them are only incapacitated, swimming in circles and belly-up, and if they are not gathered those less heavily poisoned seem to recover after a time. The poison has abso-
[271] lutely no effect on humans. The Indians wade and swim in heavily poisoned water and even drink it.[120] Our own water supply was poisoned while we were in camp and no one felt the slightest ill effect.

226
● 125 The practice of poisoning fish has been bitterly attacked as shockingly wasteful and as exterminating the fish. My impression is that it is not wasteful and does not lead to extermination. Indeed the latter charge is absurd when one considers that the Indians have been poisoning these streams for centuries, perhaps for thousands of years, and that fish are still abundant in them. The poison does not, as has been supposed, sterilize the stream and the short section over which all the fish are removed at any one fishing is quickly repopulated from above and below. It is true that large fish have become uncommon here, partly because the larger and rarer fish are killed off not with poison but with arrows and hooks, and partly because constant fishing prevents any individual's reaching a considerable age although it does give ample time for breeding. As for wastefulness, it must be a rare fish, indeed, that is poisoned but not gathered and eaten. Even the tiniest fish are carefully saved. Those that are lightly poisoned and escape by swimming do not appear to be permanently harmed.

226 A fish-poisoning is also a great social occasion and the stream rings with
[627] laughter and chatter — a happy event that leaves no headache as do other Indian social occasions.

[252] Many of the fish gathered are immediately stewed and eaten. Any surplus
[262] is sun-dried and saved for the future.
[251]

Food Preparation.

252 The Kamarakotos cook all the food that we would ordinarily cook. They do not eat raw meat, fish, or vegetables and very little is eaten raw except

120 [see footnote on p. 321 category 116 - Analysis]

[text continues on p. 137]

589 595 162 is a definite group of sexually mature but young and (as a group) not quite full-grown men who are not married, a definite young bachelor class in the tribe.

Division of Labor

511 461 Kamarakotos have a very definite standard of living which is almost universally attained. They work hard to maintain a proper household, with a good dwelling, an adequate farm-patch, hammocks, baskets, and such other household objects as they require, personal ornaments, and the other appurtenances of their way of life. When these things are, for the moment, achieved, the [556] [185] Indians rest and play. Hoarding of wealth, provision for the future, or any accumulation of things not for current use is not attempted. Only in this sense can they be considered at all lazy, and given their own standards and their abundant energy when they have, by these standards, any reason to work, it is entirely unjust to apply the word "lazy" to them at all.

462 Nor is it true of them, whatever can be said of other Indians, that an unfair amount of labor is assigned to the women. Man's work and woman's work are, as a rule, sharply defined. Men and women do different things and often their work is done at different times, but they do roughly equivalent amounts of work. A man may be seen idly watching a woman work, but not more often than a woman idly watching a working man. It is also noteworthy that there are many operations in which men and women work together, seldom doing the same task but performing integrated parts of a common task. And while in general a man will not do a woman's work, he will do so if circumstances warrant. For instance, nothing is more typically woman's work than carrying a [554] [464] baby, but I have seen a man doing this, leaving the woman unburdened, on a long trek when his wife became tired.

The most important characters of the division of labor are:

Men	Women
The felling of trees, clearing of ground, and the actual construction of all buildings.	Most of the hauling and carrying incidental to building, but the men may help some.
Clearing and planting of conucos.	Cultivation and harvesting of crops and carrying them to the house.
All hunting and fishing except, in part, fish-poisoning.	----------

177 life and in habits of thought and by things that induce or that follow such more
[291] thorough-going modifications. The aboriginal fringe apron was not essentially modified on the colonial level by the use of glass beads in its manufacture, but the introduction of dresses on the modern level betokens a profound change in the use of clothing and in the psychological attitude toward it and arising from it.

It is possible that the Kamarakotos were exposed to this modern level of innovation by the end of literally colonial times, but if so it did not permanently affect them and no trace of such old direct European influence is now clearly evident. Perhaps in the most exact sense and certainly as regards essential effect on them, Kamarakoto contacts directly with the outer world are about a generation old and have begun to have a profoundly modifying influence only in recent years, or one might almost say months. Five years ago the name "Kamarakoto" was known but the tribe, as a group of real human beings, about whom the cultivated world knew, could only be called undiscovered. In truth the Kamarakotos discovered the outer world, that is, civilized Venezuela, before the world discovered them. While learned men still did not know where or how the Kamarakotos lived, the Kamarakotos already knew quite well where the nearest Venezuelan towns were and what sort of life went on there.

177 On their own initiative they have brought back a great deal from these
● 185 explorations of their own, which still continue, and this is one of the peculiar and striking factors in their present cultural situation. One or two of the most influential men in the tribe, notably the cacique Alejo Calcaño, have lived for considerable periods in Venezuelan towns, learned Spanish, become conversant with at least the superficial aspects of Venezuelan civilization, and brought this knowledge back to the tribe. To extend and consolidate this influence the cacique himself sent his nephew Antonio Montesdeoca into the settlements to acquire similar knowledge and to return with it to the tribe. The attitude of these men is one of progressivism, as they understand it. They are not willfully destroying the Indian way of life, but their influence is almost constantly to make it conform more and more to the ordinary Venezuelan pattern. The effects are not very apparent as yet, but the nature of this influence from within augurs rapid change. The effects are probably nearly as rapid as would be those of direct contact by the tribe as a whole. At least they are less conducive to antagonism and degeneracy, for they tend to follow the course of adapting new things to the Indian life rather than of uprooting Indian culture faster than it can be replaced, a frequent effect of the usual means of direct action.

177 More direct influence is still more recent and is mainly represented by
123 our own expedition and, to less extent, by that of last year. Even when, as was not primarily true in those cases, such expeditions have the purpose of studying the Indians as they are, they inevitably have the effect of considerably upsetting things as they are. They introduce all sorts of goods that would not reach them